

hostile force and hurled it back.” During the 5 hours of fighting, Ross killed or wounded at least 58 Germans and saved his brothers in arms.

Ross reenlisted in the Army to see action in Korea, serving another two decades. He retired from Active Duty in 1964 at the rank of master sergeant. He was awarded the Medal of Honor, “[f]or conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.”

Although he moved to DuPont, WA, after his retirement from the U.S. Army, Ross made a trip back to his hometown in Kentucky nearly every year on his birthday. In his own words, he enjoyed coming back to the Commonwealth because, “[e]verybody here treats me well.”

He turned down offers to make his life into a Hollywood film, but Ross has been memorialized on a U.S. Postal Service stamp and by a section of Kentucky Route 92 in his home county. In 2014, Ross was a member of the inaugural class admitted to the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame.

Like so many other members of the Greatest Generation, Wilburn Ross answered the call to defend our Nation. Through his bravery and sacrifice, he helped secure freedom across the globe. The story of his courageous actions and selfless service will continue to be told, both in McCreary County and across the Commonwealth. Elaine and I send our condolences to his family and friends.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today, with great humility during National Police Week, I wish to recognize the brave men and women of law enforcement across the country. These individuals have answered the call to serve and every day they put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. I especially want to honor those who have lost their lives in the line of duty and observe the sacrifices of their families.

First, I especially want to recognize three law enforcement officers who lost their lives in New Jersey last year. These three men made the ultimate sacrifice for their communities, and we owe them and their families our sincerest respect. On July 1, 2016, the New Jersey Department of Corrections lost Nikeelan “Nick” Semmon. On March 7, 2016, the New Jersey State Police lost Sean Cullen. On December 5, 2016, the New Jersey State Police also lost Frankie Williams.

These officers dedicated their lives to protecting our communities, and they served our State with valor and integrity. I feel privileged to call them fellow New Jerseyans, and my thoughts and prayers continue to be with the family and friends of these brave public servants. As we continue to mourn and remember Officer Semmon, Trooper Cullen, and Trooper Williams, let us pledge to honor their sacrifice by work-

ing every day to emulate their devotion to public service through acts of service and love.

It is in that spirit that I want to talk about the important work that still needs to be done to support law enforcement. Congress plays a critical role in supporting law enforcement, both at the Federal level and at the State and local level. There are few bills I want to mention that I believe we must pass to uphold our commitment to brave men and women in law enforcement.

First, on February 16, 2017, I introduced the bipartisan Law Enforcement Officers’ Equity Act. Unfortunately, due to a technical error, nearly 30,000 Federal law enforcement officers classified as GS-0083 police officers did not receive enhanced benefits under the U.S. Code. For example, certain officers who work for Federal agencies, such as the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Mint, National Institute of Health and many more, receive lower pensions as compared to other law enforcement officers with similar responsibilities.

The Law Enforcement Officers’ Equity Act would expand the definition of “law enforcement officer” for retirement purposes to include all Federal law enforcement officers. The change would grant law enforcement officer status to the following individuals: employees who are authorized to carry a firearm and whose duties include the investigation and/or apprehension of suspected criminals; employees of the Internal Revenue Service whose duties are primarily the collection of delinquent taxes and securing delinquent returns; employees of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; and employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who are department police offices. These officers face the same risks and challenges as the men and women currently classified properly under Federal law as law enforcement officers, and they deserve the same benefits. We must pass this bill.

I am also a proud cosponsor of the Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act. This legislation would increase the amount of Pell grant funds available to children of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS workers, and fire police. First responders across the country put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe. When most people are running away from danger, they are running towards it. For those who put themselves in danger on a daily basis, we must honor their sacrifice and support their families in times of tragedy. Helping children of first responders pay for an education is the least we can do to honor the sacrifice of someone who fell in the line of duty. We must pass this bill.

I am also a cosponsor of the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017, which I am pleased to say passed the Senate yesterday. We all

know the stress and unique challenges police officers across our Nation face in doing their jobs. They risk their lives and are often exposed to traumatizing incidents. The Federal Government must do all it can to support police who suffer from trauma or other mental health issues due to the rigors and dangers of their job. The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017 would direct the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Resources to provide support to State and local law enforcement to access mental healthcare services and make sure that hotlines are available for officers who are in need of help. I hope the House of Representatives takes up this bill soon and passes it.

I am proud to sponsor the Law Enforcement Officers’ Equity Act and cosponsor the Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act and Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act. There is so much work for us to do to live up to our commitment to law enforcement across the country, and I am committed to continuing to work with my colleagues on these critical issues. Thank you.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, along with my dad, Clair, who started our family homebuilding business 45 years ago, I wish to congratulate the National Association of Home Builders on reaching its 75th anniversary.

For three-quarters of a century, NAHB has been fighting for the American dream, advocating for those who want to own a home for themselves and their families and advocating for homebuilders who provide jobs and make the homeowners’ dreams a reality.

Before coming to Congress, I worked for my dad in our family homebuilding business, and I have great respect for the work their members do in our communities. They truly are job creators, economic drivers, and dream makers.

I have been happy to meet with some of their members when they have come to Capitol Hill. I can tell you that it is helpful to have face-to-face meetings with their team to talk about the issues that matter to them the most. Though I have a background in homebuilding, many congressional and Presidential staff do not. It makes a difference to hear from folks on the ground in their business.

When it comes to homebuilding and homeownership, we all share the same goal—let’s keep home prices affordable.

Their advocacy has enabled millions of American families, like mine, to make one of the most important purchases of their lives: a home.

As you know, when people achieve the American dream of homeownership, they are on the path to wealth creation and upward mobility, not to